

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

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### **Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #57**

**SEINE FISHERIES:** ADF&G conducted an aerial survey of the Eastern and Northern districts yesterday, and observed continued run entry of wild stock pink and chum salmon in the Eastern District.

Eggtakes are underway at SGH, with approximately 69% of the final goal completed through August 15. A pink salmon cleanup fishery at the head of Port Valdez is possible upon completion of VFDA's eggtake operations, with time and area to be announced at a future date.

PWSAC completed its pink salmon cost recovery program on July 31, and reports a hatchery escapement estimate of 788,000 pink salmon at AFK, CCH, and WNH. PWSAC's final broodstock needs include a cumulative hatchery escapement of 949,000 pink salmon at all three facilities. PWSAC expects to begin its eggtake operations early next week.

Final harvest numbers for the August 15 fishery in Prince William Sound are unavailable at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that at least 2.03 million pink salmon were harvested using an average weight of 2.8 pounds per fish. Cumulative pink salmon harvest totals for Prince William Sound through August 15 include approximately 1.8 million VFDA cost recovery fish, 1.7 million PWSAC cost recovery fish, and an estimated 74.1 million CPF fish. This total commercial harvest of 77.6 million fish is a record pink salmon harvest for Prince William Sound, and tops the state's record of 75 million for pink salmon harvest by area, which was set in Southeast Alaska in 1999.

ADF&G has calculated an inseason forecast projection for cumulative commercial harvest (CCPF and hatchery cost recovery (HCR)), based on harvest data through August 14, and the 2001–2011 (odd years only) cumulative commercial harvest (CCP + HCR) percentage complete through August 14. Run timing appears to be advanced based on early harvests, escapements, and sex ratios, and ADF&G research staff project a year-end commercial harvest of 90.9 million pink salmon (range of 79.9 million to 103.3 million). Should the 2013 run exhibit normal timing, the final commercial harvest projection increases to approximately 114 million pink salmon (range of 93.9 million to 145 million).

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the August 10 Eastern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 11% hatchery and 89% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 48,700 pink salmon. Of the estimated 6,280 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 50% CCH, 25% WNH, and 25% SGH.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the August 10 Northern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 91% hatchery and 9% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 76,200 pink salmon. Of the estimated 736,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 59% WNH, 34% CCH, and 7% AFK.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the August 10 Southwestern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 84% hatchery and 16% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 316,000 pink salmon. Of the estimated 1.67 million hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 41.5% AFK, 41.5% WNH, and 17% CCH.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District, south of a line from Entrance Point to Potato Point, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17; Sunday, August 18; and Monday, August 19. Harvest for the August 14 Eastern District CPF was 11 sockeye, 338 coho, 50,600 pink, and 315 chum salmon, with 5 deliveries reported.

**The following regulatory closed waters in the Eastern District as defined in 5 AAC 24.350(3) are being suspended until further notice:**

1. Sheep Bay: north of a line from 60° 41.99' N. lat., 145° 56.11' W. long. to 60° 41.17' N. lat., 145° 55.87' W. long.;
2. Olsen Bay: north of 60° 44.06' N. lat.;
3. Beartrap Bay: east of a line from 60° 44.86' N. lat., 145° 59.64' W. long. to 60° 44.55' N. lat., 145° 59.62' W. long.;

Anadromous stream closures as defined in 5 AAC 39.290 remain in effect until further notice.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH SHA, CCH THA, and excluding all waters of the Cannery Creek Subdistrict north and east of a line with a northwest terminus of 61° 00.97' N. lat., 147° 35.50' W. long., and a southeast terminus of 60° 59.12' N. lat., 147° 32.35' W. long.,** will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17; Sunday, August 18; and Monday, August 19. Harvest for the August 14 Northern District CPF was 3 sockeye, 23 coho, 438,000 pink, and 3 chum salmon, with 41 deliveries reported.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** Waters of the Coghill District, **including waters of the WNH SHA up to a line of buoys in front of the barrier net,** will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17, and Sunday, August 18.

Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding waters of the WNH HEEZ,** will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for a 14-hour fishing period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Monday, August 19. The WNH HEEZ consists of the waters of the WNH SHA north of a latitude line at 60° 47.78' N. Drift gillnet harvest for the August 14 Coghill District CPF was 2 Chinook, 23 sockeye, 989 coho, 109,000 pink, and 27 chum salmon, with 135 deliveries reported. Purse seine harvest for the August 14 Coghill District CPF was 2 sockeye, 53 coho, 179,000 pink, and 17 chum salmon, with 19 deliveries reported.

**NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17; Sunday, August 18; and Monday, August 19. There was no harvest reported for the August 14 Northwestern District CPF.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding waters of the AFK Outer HEEZ,** will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17; Sunday, August 18; and Monday, August 19. The AFK Outer HEEZ consists of the waters of the AFK SHA west and south of a line from 60° 03.398' N. lat., 148° 03.326' W. long. to 60° 03.017' N. lat., 148° 02.547' W. long. Harvest for the August 14 Southwestern District CPF was 1 Chinook, 22 sockeye, 670 coho, 1.53 million pink, and 269 chum salmon, with 149 deliveries reported.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17; Sunday, August 18; and Monday, August 19. Harvest for the August 14 Montague District CPF is confidential.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Saturday, August 17; Sunday, August 18; and Monday, August 19. There was no harvest reported for the August 14 Southeastern District CPF.

**The following regulatory closed waters in the Southeastern District as defined in 5 AAC 24.350(11) are being suspended until further notice:**

1. Port Etches: east of a line from 60° 21.09' N. lat., 146° 33.94' W. long. to 60° 20.06' N. lat., 146° 32.72' W. long., and south of a line from 60° 19.71' N. lat., 146° 34.11' W. long. to 60° 19.01' N. lat., 146° 35.62' W. long.;

Anadromous stream closures as defined in 5 AAC 39.290 remain in effect until further notice.

**The next scheduled PURSE SEINE salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Monday, August 19.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to "harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct." 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an "intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering." (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.